

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

GUIDELINES FOR ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS

Introduction

The University awards endowed professorships to eminent faculty members¹ whose accomplishments in research, teaching, and or professional and/or institutional service advance the mission of their department or college, the University, or the State. Professorships are established to recruit distinguished scholars to the faculty, to retain current accomplished faculty members, and to recognize faculty members who have established and excel nationally in their disciplines. The University awards professorships that have been created with two different sources of funding: Endowed Professorships sponsored solely by funds donated to the UL Lafayette Foundation and BORSF Professorships funded in part by matching funds from the Board of Regents Support Fund.

The vast majority of professorships are awarded on a competitive basis to current faculty members. The tenure of such an award is three years; an incumbent may apply for subsequent terms. A limited number of professorships are awarded non-competitively to retain or recruit outstanding faculty members; these awards may be continued for so long as regular review every three years concludes that the incumbent demonstrates a continuing high level of performance judged against the criteria of these guidelines. In exceptional cases of distinguished achievements, a faculty member may hold more than one professorship simultaneously. “Vermilion Professorships” are reserved for faculty whose research, scholarship, or creative endeavors mark them as exceptional among their peers. Faculty members holding Endowed Chairs are not eligible for professorships.

A professorship award carries a supplementary stipend, the amount of which is determined annually based on the investment experience of the University’s endowment. The professorship stipend may therefore, change during the term of an award. Vermilion Professorships carry a significantly larger stipend than other professorships. In certain cases, as determined by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and approved by the Professorship Selection Committee, revenues produced by an endowed professorship may be used for a faculty member’s research or travel expenses or for graduate student support.

Board of Regents Statewide Principles and Guidelines for Operation of Endowed Professorships

As stipulated in the Board of Regents policy on BORSF Professorships, the “Endowed Professorship program is designed to further achievement of the constitutionally prescribed goals of the Support Fund: to enhance the quality of higher education and promote economic development in Louisiana.” The following additional guidelines pertain to BORSF professorships.

- A. Professorships shall be awarded to faculty recipients for terms of one year or more.
- B. Except under extenuating circumstances, as approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education, no more than two years shall elapse from the provision of State match to its award by the campus. If an

¹ In some cases, professorships are available to distinguished senior researchers who are not faculty members. For those professorships, the term “faculty member” refers to these researchers as well.

endowed professorship should become vacant, the same rule shall apply.

C. The institution shall not divide professorships among multiple recipients except in special circumstances as approved by the Commissioner of Higher Education.

D. Income generated from an endowed professorship shall be designated specifically for the use of the faculty member holding the position, not for general discretionary use of departments or the campus.

E. Campus officials shall have the primary and final responsibility to determine professorship recipients.

As feasible, campuses shall develop and maintain regular interaction with donors, including annual reporting and involvement of donors in award ceremonies.

General Qualifications and Selection Criteria for All Professorships

The recipient of a professorship must hold appointment as a full-time faculty member or continuing senior researcher. The vast majority of professorships are awarded to tenured or tenure-track faculty. In the case of some professorships designated for outstanding teaching, continuing faculty who hold the rank of senior or master instructor is also eligible. In cases in which a faculty member holding a professorship assumes an administrative position within the University, that person may complete the term of the award.

Professorships may be awarded to department heads, graduate coordinators, associate deans, deans, and the like or research administrators; however, department heads, graduate coordinators, associate deans, deans, who do apply for the awards are held to the same standards of evaluation of excellence in research, teaching, or professional and/or institutional service as all other faculty applicants. Professorships are awarded primarily based on research and scholarship, teaching, and/or public service during the previous three years.

Excellence in research and scholarship is evidenced by eminent intellectual contributions primarily through publications or creative work: articles in strong refereed journals; conference proceedings of national scope; books or creative works by major publishers; exhibitions or performances at major venues; and other sorts of significant works commonly recognized within the academic community. Signature initiatives, and externally funded research grants, especially those awarded competitively by federal agencies or major foundations, are taken as evidence of the merit of research activities.

Excellence in teaching is evidenced by activities such as publications on the scholarship of learning and teaching in strong-refereed journals and/or conference proceedings of national scope. This may include other forms of scholarship that focus on the area of teaching, service-learning, pedagogical approaches, mentoring students, integrating technology (including distance learning), assessment, and by supporting student success in learning and research. Consideration is given to integrating undergraduate and graduate students into research activities.

Excellence in professional service consists of leadership positions in and honors and awards from community, regional, and national professional and public organizations. Excellence in institutional service includes; efforts and leadership roles in concert with the University's mission and strategic plan which include substantial contributions that advance educational, cultural, and economic development initiatives that contribute to the growth of academic units and/or centers.

The donor may establish a professorship with specific selection criteria and expectations for its holder such as exceptional teaching, or exceptional contributions to a particular program, research center, or other constituent unit of the University

Configuration of Professorship Awards

A. Individual Professorship

Typically, a faculty member holds a single professorship. The screening and selection process is administered through the offices of the college deans and the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development. A few professorships are awarded to senior researchers or faculty affiliated with research centers, in which cases the screening process is administered through the office of the center director. (Throughout this document, actions and responsibilities attributed to deans should be understood to apply to center directors for professorships awarded to center affiliates.)

Annually, in the fall semester, the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall distribute to the deans a list of vacant professorships and professorships whose terms expire at the conclusion of that academic year. Each dean is to distribute the list of vacant professorships to all department heads and faculty members in the college. The professorship will be offered for a three-year term. Screening and Selection Committees for professorships should include the donors or donors' representative.

B. Linked Professorships

At the request of an academic dean, the University may approve the linkage of two otherwise distinct professorships for awarding in a given three-year period. The linked professorships would be awarded to faculty who meet a higher standard of performance established by a college and/or who are charged with overseeing a particular project/task of importance to the college, whether it is pedagogical, scholarly, or administrative.

Annually in the Fall Semester, a college dean may request of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to couple two available professorships and offer them together. The dean would have to explain in writing the specific criteria or performance expectations of the newly linked professorships. Faculty holding linked professorships would receive the stipends attached to the individual professorships that are combined.

The linked professorships would be offered for a three-year term. The linked professorships could be disaggregated at the end of the award period or before that if, the faculty member holding the award gave up the dual award for any reason. In certain cases, as determined by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, and approved by the Selection Committee, revenues produced by an endowed professorship may be used for a faculty member's research or travel expenses or for graduate student support. In the case of linked professorships, if a professorship is awarded for a project/task then the holder will only be eligible to receive the stipend.

Should the dean and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs decide to continue to link two professorships for another three-year term, that award would be open to competition among all eligible faculty members. The assessment of whether an incumbent would be eligible for re-awarding of linked professorships would be largely contingent upon his/her research productivity, success in teaching and student learning, and accomplishment of the additional tasks and goals articulated in the guidelines.

Screening and Selection Committees for linked professorships should include the donors or donors' representatives from both of the two professorships being linked.

C. Vermilion Professorships

Annually in the fall semester, a college dean may request of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs to join from three to five available professorships to offer these together as a “Vermilion Professorship.” The dean will explain in writing the specific criteria or performance expectations of the newly linked professorships. The Vermillion Professorship will be offered for a three-year term.

Should the dean and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs decide to continue to offer a Vermilion Professorship, the award would be open to competition among all eligible faculty members.

Vermillion Professorships—are reserved for faculty whose research, scholarship, or creative endeavors are exceptional, exceeding that of single or linked professorship holders. The stipends awarded with Vermilion Professorships are significantly larger than those awarded standard professorships. Vermilion Professorships may also provide funds supportive of research and creative endeavors including, for example, hiring graduate assistants, traveling, and purchasing needed equipment.

The Screening and Selection Process

For each professorship, a University-level Selection Committee reviews applications and makes a final recommendation to the President. The deliberations of the Selection Committee are informed by the recommendations of a college-level Screening Committee charged with determining which applicants are qualified and ranking the qualified candidates.

There are three situations in which a Screening Committee is not formed: 1) when, with the approval of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the professorship will be used to recruit a new faculty member, in which case the departmental search committee will substitute for the Screening Committee; 2) when a dean or department head or the director of a center or institute reporting directly to the Vice President for Research is an applicant; and 3) when the renewal of a non-competitively-awarded professorship is being considered.

A. Applications

Unless the professorship being applied for specifies other requirements, an applicant for a professorship should send the following materials to the dean of the college with which the professorship is associated:

1. A cover letter briefly summarizing the applicant’s qualification for the award. Applicants are to submit both a hard copy and a pdf file of their cover letter.
2. A curriculum vitae *focused on the last three years* that includes in the following recommended sequence: personal data; educational background; employment history; publications in complete bibliographic form (denoting journals that are refereed and providing acceptance rates or other indications or evidence of journal competitiveness where possible); honors; professional activities; funded research and other grants; economic development successes; and university and community service. Works in progress shall be included if they have been accepted in final edited form and documentation to that effect is included with the application materials. Applicants are to submit both a hard copy and a pdf file of their vitae.
3. Copies of publications from the last three years, in electronic form, if possible.
4. Other documentation of professional activities that the applicant wishes to provide.
5. Two letters of recommendation, one of which must be from outside the University. (An incumbent applying for renewal of a professorship need not submit a new outside letter of recommendation as one of the two required letters.) Applicants are to submit both a hard copy and a pdf file of their letters of recommendation.

B. Screening Committee

In the case of a Screening Committee for Single or Linked Professorships, membership shall include:

1. The head/director of the relevant department/school;
2. The dean of the appropriate college, who will chair the committee;
3. A tenured faculty member appointed by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs from a list of at least two nominees submitted by the dean; and
4. The donor or the donor's representative, if that person chooses to participate; if the donor elects not to participate, no proxy is required, though, in all cases, the dean must document contact with the donor.

The dean shall ensure that there exist no conflicts of interest between Screening Committee members and the professorship applicants.

C. Alternate Screening Committee Formation

If multiple professorships in a particular discipline or department are open for application in a given year, the dean may elect to form one Screening Committee to consider all applicants for those professorships. In this case, the membership of the Screening Committee should include the same academic representatives itemized in section "B. Screening Committee" above. Donors must still be contacted to determine if they desire to participate in the screening process, and their participation must be diligently solicited in cases in which they make that desire known.

If multiple professorships exist that admit applicants from various disciplines within a college, the dean may elect to form one Screening Committee to consider all candidates and professorships in aggregate. In this case, the Screening Committee should consist of at least two department heads and two to five faculty members, to ensure the broadest possible representation of the college's departments and faculty. As always, donors must be allowed to participate in the screening process for their respective professorships if they wish.

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs must select faculty appointees to these Screening Committees from a list nominated by the dean.

D. Screening Committee Procedures

1. The dean shall review the applications to ensure that applicants have submitted all required documents.
2. The dean shall contact the donor or the donor's representative to determine the donor's desired level of participation, if any. This step is not necessary when the donor has previously declined future participation.
3. The dean shall then call a meeting of the Screening Committee to review the applications, determine which candidates are qualified, and rank the qualified candidates.
4. The committee shall vote by secret ballot.
5. The dean shall communicate the recommendations of the committee **by letter** in writing to the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development. That communication shall include
 - A list of College Screening Committee members;
 - A list of all applicants with an indication of those the Screening Committee has deemed qualified for the professorship;

- The committee's ranking of the candidates deemed qualified;
- Application materials from all candidates; including digital versions of vita, cover letter, and letters of recommendation;
- The ballots (including any proxy votes); and
- A copy of the minutes of the committee's meeting(s).

6. The committee shall keep confidential information regarding its proceedings and decisions

E. Selection Committee Membership

The Selection Committee is responsible for making a final recommendation to the President regarding filling the professorship.

1. Membership

The committee is composed of four permanent members and additional members related to the specific professorship to be filled. The four permanent members are

- The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs;
- The Vice President for Research;
- The Dean of the Graduate School; and
- The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development, who serves as Chair.

For any given professorship, the Selection Committee is also composed of the following members who have voting privileges, except where noted.

- The Dean of the College with which the professorship is associated. When the pool of applicants includes a department head, the relevant dean may not vote, and when the applicant is the dean, the dean does not serve as a member.
- A faculty representative from the Screening Committee. When there is no Screening Committee, the Provost and VPAA shall appoint a faculty representative to the Selection Committee.
- The donor or the donor's representative.
- The Director of Research and Sponsored Programs may be invited to participate in the meeting but does not vote.

F. Expedited and Regular Procedures Followed by the Selection Committee

When only one candidate has applied for a professorship, and the Screening Committee has unanimously found that candidate to be qualified, the Selection Committee may recommend that person to the President using the following **expedited procedure**.

The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development (whose office houses the full application materials of the candidate) shall send each member of the Selection Committee a copy of the results of the Screening Committee meeting and the candidate's CV, along with a form giving each member the option of approving the candidate for recommendation, or requesting a full meeting of the Selection Committee.

If all members approve the recommendation, the Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall forward that recommendation to the President with a copy to the relevant dean.

If one or more members request a full meeting of the committee, that fact shall be communicated to the dean. The dean and committee then shall follow the procedures for the regular selection process, specified below.

The **regular procedure** involves the Selection Committee meeting to consider the recommendation of the Screening Committee to make its recommendation to the President. The following are provisions and requirements related to the regular procedure.

The dean shall arrange for the Selection Committee meeting. As part of scheduling the meeting, the dean shall contact the donor or the donor's representative if that person has not previously declined future participation in the selection process.

The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall send each member of the Selection Committee the results of the Screening Committee meeting and the candidate's CV before the meeting. When a member of the Selection Committee is unable to attend, he or she may submit a vote by written proxy before the meeting under certain circumstances. Proxies are allowed from no more than one permanent member of the committee, from either the dean or the faculty representative (but not both), and/or from the donor. No more than two proxy votes may be submitted for the Selection Committee meeting being held.

The Selection Committee shall study and discuss the credentials of the candidate or candidates recommended by the Screening Committee. At the conclusion of the deliberations, the Selection Committee will vote by secret ballot, with each member ranking the candidates he/she deems qualified. If there are more than two candidates under consideration, the Selection Committee will continue to vote until the final candidate selected wins by a majority.

If there is only one candidate under consideration, each member shall vote "yes," "no," or "defer"; the candidate will be recommended if a majority of the votes are "yes." A vote to "defer" indicates that the member would encourage the candidate to apply again in the future after increasing accomplishments.

All committee deliberations shall be kept confidential, except that the dean of the college should inform the candidate(s) of the Selection Committee recommendation (but not the actual votes), with the understanding that final decisions are the prerogative of the President and are subject to the approval of the UL System Board of Supervisors.

The chair is responsible for the minutes of the meeting, which are kept in a file in the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development.

After the Committee's decision, the Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall then forward the name and curriculum vitae of the recommended candidate together with the minutes of the Selection Committee meeting to the President who will make the final recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. As soon as the President and the Board approve the nomination, the President's Office shall notify the relevant dean and faculty member awarded the professorship.

Calendar for Selection of Endowed Professorships

The following calendar applies to professorships that are already in existence in the Fall Semester of any given year and that are available to be filled **competitively** effective the Fall Semester of the following academic year. The dean of a college with professorships that become available later in the year shall make alternate arrangements with the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development.

On or before **November 1** each year, the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall inform each dean of the status of each professorship in that dean's college. Similar information shall also be provided to department heads.

On or before **November 15** each year, each dean shall notify all eligible faculty members in the college of the professorships that will be available in the college effective the following academic year. Each dean shall invite applications for available professorships to ensure an ample pool of applicants. Such applications must be received by the dean's announced deadline.

The dean shall constitute a College Screening Committee, with a faculty member appointed by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs as described in Section V above, on or before **March 1**, of each year.

The College Screening Committee shall transmit its recommendations, including minutes, to the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development to forward to the Selection Committee by **April 1**.

The dean shall schedule a meeting of the Selection Committee to occur as soon as practical after the Screening Committee makes its recommendation. The Endowed Professor Selection committee must complete the review of all applicants by **May 15 of each year**. Failure of the dean to schedule the meeting by such date shall result in a year's delay in filling the professorship.

The Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development shall submit for the President's and Board of Regents approval all recommendations of the Selection Committee on or before **June 15** of each year.

Upon Board of Regents, approval the President shall notify faculty of the professorship award by **September 15** of each year.

Responsibilities of the Professorship Holder and the University

The awardee shall thank the donor(s) in writing for making the professorship available.

The awardee shall participate fully in the academic activities of the academic unit in which the professorship is awarded; with particular emphases on conducting research and on teaching that contribute to the mission of the department, college and University.

The recipient of the award shall furnish the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development with an abbreviated one-page CV or bio and photo for the endowed professorship website.

The recipient of the award shall furnish the Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development, the donor, the department head, and the dean with an annual report of academic activities undertaken during the professorship. The Office of Academic Planning and Faculty Development will keep copies of the annual report on file for a period of at least five years.

The University shall maintain a website for professorship holders that will bring recognition to the work being done by the professorship holders and to the donor who made the professorship possible.

Declaration of Vacancy

A professorship that was previously awarded shall be declared vacant under the following circumstances and according to the following standards.

1. In the event of the incumbent's resignation, termination, or change from full-time to part-time faculty status, the professorship shall become vacant as of the effective date of the decision.
2. In the event that the incumbent has been denied tenure, the professorship shall become vacant at the end of the faculty member's employment at the University or at its scheduled expiration date, should that occur earlier.
3. A professorship award may be rescinded as part of a disciplinary action taken against a faculty member, in which case the professorship is then declared vacant.
4. In the event that a faculty member resigns from a professorship, the professorship shall become vacant as of the effective date of the resignation.
5. In the event that the relevant dean determines that an incumbent has failed to fulfill professorship obligations, has not maintained a sufficient level of research, teaching, and service activity comparable to that presented for selection, or has had an extended illness (beyond one year), that person shall request that the President of the University reconvene the Selection Committee to hold appropriate hearings in order to determine the proper course of action relative to the continuance or termination of the professorship.

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